
The Wesleyan

THE WESLEYAN

May Volume LXI, No. 5 1944

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The Wesleyan is published by the students of Wesleyan College, Macon, Georgia.

Member NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION Est. 1921

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NOTE FROM A VERY NEW EDITOR—

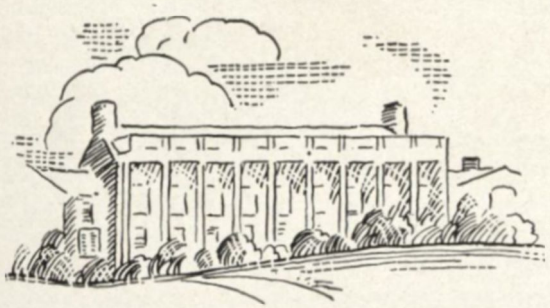
It was an unexpected gift, and I was trembling with excitement. Skates, shiny new skates! Funny little feelings of happy but frightening anticipation ran over me as I strapped their newness to my feet. My friends were about me watching as I ungracefully stood on the unaccustomed wheels. *I had never skated before, and I was oddly afraid.* My feet went forward awkwardly, then I looked about me embarrassed because my movements were not smooth and experienced. My eyes looked timidly at the people about me and I whispered, "This is new to me, but I'll learn how." They nodded in a friendly little way that made me feel confident and happy inside. Their silent support as I stumbled forward steadied my feet—and suddenly I was unafraid. In my heart there sang a confident, cheering song, *"I'll learn how to do it. They won't let me fall."*

—Elizabeth Jones

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By The Way—



Via The Mails

The Wesleyan welcomes a new writer, *Mary Byers.* As you read this fresh story little fingers of hope will play on your heart until you find yourself saying, "Maybe miracles do happen after all."

* * *

This Thing Called Living

Do you want to know all about it? Then read *"Down Days".* It is fascinating in its newness and animation. It becomes even more special when you discover it is a story about someone you know—*Miriam Chylinski.*

* * *

Don't Miss "A Man's Love"

You will read it, and in its appealing beauty, you will sense the shadow of its writer, *Pat Markey.* Pat in her first contribution to the Wesleyan introduces a clear unusual style that makes the heart cry out for more.

* * *

De Lord, He Is Good

Have you met Jonothan Jones and Niccodemus? If not let *Elizabeth Hearne* tell you about them. Her words will bring them to life for you, and Jonothan and Niccodemus will become your friends—A different story written in a warm understanding way!

* * *

Who Is Mrs. Van P?

Ask *Martha Rumble.* She knows all about her.

Poetry To Please

Wesleyans can see poetry in anything from a lowly waste paper basket to the silvery beauty of an April night. Here are poems to please your every mood. Become dreamy over "An April Night" with *Effie Thornton,* then slip into a nameless bit of beauty that speaks of love with *Mary Collins.* If you are strangely lonely and long for something to ease the hurt in your heart stop for a moment with *Peggy Worley.* And if you're "Just Thinkin' " watch out or your thoughts like *Miriam Chylinski's* might find themselves in the strangest place.

* * *

Priscilla Lobeck, whose paintings we all admire, is also an artist with words. These words paint pictures that we call perfect poems.

* * *

'Tis But a Cloud

The curtain's going up on *Dorothy Lachmund's* first performance for the Wesleyan. We are quiet as we watch a scene perhaps from our own childhood, a scene with a familiar truth presented in a simple pleasing way. It is a play that leaves us saying, "We want a return performance."

* * *

Keepsake

This is a story you will probably read not o n c e but several times. With each reading there comes a growing feeling of "This is real writing." The Wesleyan and its readers want more stories from *Mildred Collins.*

* * *

Wiggle

Although there was no one to listen but Wiggle, Judy found he understood. *Peggy Halliburton* has blended lightness and seriousness in this delightful story. The picture of Judy and Wiggle are from Peggy's pen too.

* * *

Ellen Barber

Ellen deserves special praise for her drawings in this issue of the Wesleyan. Her work gives an aliveness to the magazine that we all like.

KEEPSAKE

Kay danced in a swirl of white with pale fuschia streamers that fell from her shoulders and rainbowed their way to the floor. She was every one and no one at the dance—every one because each partner who came to her said, "You're the loveliest person here" . . . no one because she was like all the others, gay, facetious, pretending. She laughed and closed her eyes and lied, "I love the music". Yet inwardly she screamed, "Oh God . . . if I could only be myself!"

Still, she only smiled and let herself become more limp and feminine in the corporal's arms. She moved with him and thought, "I'm very happy" . . . then grew sick knowing how she wasn't happy . . . knowing how she hated this person she'd become.

So Barry came . . . no different from the rest . . . just "May I have this dance?" . . . her automatic smile and flippant, "Hello" . . . and her hand in his. Then she stopped a moment, looked at him, and trembled . . . yes, trembled just a bit so that he asked, "Is something wrong?" And she answered, "No . . . no . . . nothing."

There really wasn't. Kay knew that. After all, she hadn't come to meet Barry . . . hadn't come to meet anybody. She was there because she was lonely and troubled and lost . . . because for now, with music and dancing and forced laughter she would forget. Afterward there would be her room again and the loneliness worse than before. But for these three hours it would be gone. She could make herself forget.

They danced near a window, and he tightened his grip on her hand . . . the awful power of his hand. "Please . . . you're hurting me," she said. And he, "Oh . . . I'm sorry . . . I didn't mean . . . "

Then his eyes, purple-blue, deep-set, intense, so that she was afraid to look at him lest she cry. She tried to calm herself, to gain strength from his strength. So she armed herself with the smile—the brilliant, too-revealing smile, and said gaily, "This is fun."

She couldn't miss the way he winced . . . the pleading of his, "Please . . . please don't . . . I want to know you as you really are."

Then helplessly she cast the smile away and felt his fingers sensitive and strong on hers and prayed the inner soul, "Oh help me understand."

Somehow she felt calmer now, and yet more tense with life. She looked up and let her eyes meet his.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"You'll laugh."

"Good . . . I need a laugh."

"Oh, but I don't want you to."

"All right," he promised. "I won't."

"It's . . . it's Katrinka." And she looked down embarrassed. Why had she told him?

"Katrinka . . . Why I like that. What do they call you . . . Trina? . . . or Trinka?"

"Goodness no . . . They did call me Trinka once, when I was small. But all the children used to tease me . . . 'Trinka . . . Trinka . . . what you thinka?' Now they just call me Kay". She looked away a minute. She'd never told anyone else that silly little fact . . . Why him?

"I'm Barry . . . Barry Everett . . . Barry and Kay . . . K for Keepsake . . . Do you mind?"

They they were back in the middle of the

hall with the orchestra playing something that they would never remember because they weren't listening. And Kay's whispered, "Let's go . . . please."

They walked along the street—Kay and Barry—pausing before each lighted window to talk excitedly and point in a very undignified way at something they'd like to have.

Kay thought, "This is like childhood again . . . But your age . . . Don't forget."

And Barry's mind said, "Windowshopping. You don't like this sort of thing. Remember?"

But they did not remember.

"Where are we going?" Kay asked.

"Here." And Barry left her for a moment while she gazed at baskets of long-stemmed roses and white gardenias and gladioli sprays. Then he was with her again, holding a miniature bouquet of pansies. He put them in her hand saying, "These are best for now. They're you . . . Deep purple for royalty . . . lavender for hidden secrets . . . gold for happiness."

Kay's fingers caressed the tiny flower heads. "Purple for royalty," she heard again . . . and she lifted her head a little proudly. Then she remembered the other flowers from other men at times before. She was afraid again . . . afraid of being hurt, so that the inner soul warned, "Be careful, Kay . . . Don't give too much."

And for a moment Barry's eyes no longer saw pansies, but orchids—soft and frail orchids—nestled among waves of auburn hair, and a girl with laughing eyes and a tinkling voice. His soul said, "Barry . . . Barry . . . Don't forget . . . Helen."

Then Kay told herself, "This is different . . . I know it is . . . Not like the others . . ."

And Barry argued silently, "Strange . . . somehow this seems deeper . . . closer than Helen."

They turned down a side street and then into a sort of alley that brought them to a little restaurant that was built like a house, with a chimney rising from one side and checkered curtains at the windows. Inside, Barry led her to a table in a little alcove. "This is pleasant-like," Kay said, glancing at the red checkered cloth and the candle on the table.

"Like spaghetti?" Barry asked.

"Oh yes . . . and pumpernickle bread."

"They're yours," he promised and nodded to the waiter.

Kay couldn't say just what happened that night . . . only that the melody of their talking went on far past midnight. They spoke of things they liked . . . of life . . . and finally of themselves.

"You've been hurt by something, haven't you?" he asked.

"By some one," Kay replied. And the inner self prodded, "Careful, Kay . . . Don't tell too much."

"I'm afraid *I* might be hurt sometime too," he said. And thought, "Hurt? . . . How could you be? . . . How, if you stay with Helen?"

"But maybe you're not sure of . . . ," Barry began.

"What did you say?"

"Oh nothing . . . nothing . . . Say, wouldn't you like some coffee?"

The waiter brought two cups. "Sugar and cream?" Barry asked.

"Neither, thank you."

"Good! That makes you one of the brotherhood," he exclaimed enthusiastically.

"Brotherhood?" Kay asked bewildered. "I don't understand."

"Oh of course not . . . I forgot," Barry explained. "Terms we used in college . . . for those fellows who took theirs straight."

"I like mine straight," she said, and she had to look away quickly because she found herself sinking helplessly into the depths of his eyes.

The candle on the table crept low toward the saucer on which it stood. Barry scraped away a bit of the wax . . . began to mold

it with his fingers. "Funny fingers," Kay thought. "Slim and rather square at the tips. Funny hands too . . . sort of fiercely strong." She felt their strength as though she were the wax he held—a tiny figurine to be shaped as he chose.

Again the inner Kay warned, "Don't . . . don't let him . . . Don't let any one do that again."

And Barry said, "I feel sort of heady . . . as though I'm drunk . . . but I've never been drunk." And he thought, "Of course you've never been drunk . . . your family . . . the firm . . . Helen . . . God, how I love Helen . . . "

Somewhere in another room someone was playing a piano. The music never ceased, one song rippling skillfully into another. Kay looked up at the low ceiling of the room. A little blaze of candle-light pushed its way through the haze of smoke from their cigarettes and flickered on the plaster overhead. Somehow the ceiling seemed almost alive . . . becoming in some strange way a part of the walls, and descending imperceptibly, yet quite surely, to push the two at the table closer together.

"Tonight's been a different night, hasn't it?" Barry asked. And he thought, "Different? . . . Of course not . . . No different from any girl—except Helen . . . Don't forget that, fellow!"

"A lovely night," Kay answered. And the inner soul said, "There . . . Now you've let go . . . Why? . . . Oh why? . . . I warned you . . . Have you forgotten . . . that other time?"

It was then that Barry showed her the wax . . . picked up her hand and pressed into it the little object he'd been molding. "I said K for Keepsake . . . Here's a keepsake then . . . something of mine . . . from me to you."

Kay lifted her fingers slowly . . . looked at the white form lying in her palm. It was a heart.

Suddenly the ceiling came faster. The walls were screaming with their speed. It was like being caught in a cave, with a huge boulder in front of the opening and water descending in torrents to smother out all life. Barry leaned closer . . . cupped her chin in his hand . . . drew her face toward his . . . kissed her.

Then something great and strange and terrifying within Kay began quickening her pulse, pounding to make itself heard. "He's no different . . . like all the rest . . . You'll be hurt again . . . Don't . . . don't . . . "

And Barry thought, "Oh God . . . no . . . no . . . the wax . . . I've got to get it back . . . got to . . . for Helen, for Helen . . . "

"Please . . . please," Kay fought with tears. "K for Keepsake . . . But let it be tonight . . . not this . . . I can't . . . "

Frantically she crushed the heart into a formless mass and dropped it on the candle's flame. It sputtered for a moment, then fell shapeless into the saucer.

They left the table them . . . left the restaurant that looked like a little house . . . left while the candle burned its last half inch . . . while the smoke rose and patted the ceiling, and the piano monotony tinkled on.

"Please hurry," Barry told the cab driver. Then he took his place beside Kay. The fuschia streamers lay limp on her knees. She put her head back on the seat and laughed gaily. And suddenly she became the Kay of the dance floor again.

"You've changed," Barry said sadly. And he thought, "Why mention it? . . . It's right this way . . . This is how you want it . . . just like any other girl."

"I'm sorry . . . I didn't mean to," Kay answered. And the inner soul rebuked, "You're lying . . . Of course you meant to . . . You should have . . . This is right . . . You're safe now . . . No hurt this way."

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Barry walked with Kay to the door of the house. "I'm sorry for some things," he said. "But I'm glad for tonight." And he thought, "Not glad . . . only afraid . . . Tonight shouldn't have been."

"It's been a lovely evening," Kay replied. "I'd like you to have a pansy . . . K for Keepsake." But she thought, "Why did you give him that? . . . He mustn't remember . . . We shouldn't have met."

"Thank you for this," Barry said. "I'd like to see you again . . . call you some time . . . May I?"

"Please do . . . yes do."

Kay left him then . . . leaned wearily against the door inside. The inner soul was pleading, "Oh God . . . Never again . . . Don't let him call . . . Not another hurt . . . I'm afraid."

And Barry thought, "Call her . . . I can't . . . no . . . no . . . I won't Something might happen . . . Better forget tonight . . . There's Helen . . . Remember."

For a moment he stood, looking at the pansy in his hand. "Deep purple for royalty . . . " Then he dropped it to the ground . . . crushed it with his heel . . . stepped into the waiting cab.

—Mildred Collins

POEM

Because winter white is blue and robin-egged
And stippled bits of ink a print;
Because sand is mountain, black immaculate,
And since sound rips forth from calm lines on
the air,
Since dog is blood and flesh and man is soul,
Why then not we?

Because spring mitigates and families change
And flames are green and smoke inevitable;
Because grey is rainbow, mist and mood,
And since death comes of living, dark of light;
Since great evades the great and dust divides,
Why then not we?

Why not we
If wind can be unkind,
Or shadows light a midnight room,
Or water pour from desert trees,
And love grow hot from bitterness or pride
Or wrong or gloom.

—Priscilla Lobeck

WIGGLE



"Wiggle! Shame on you!" Judy grabbed up the black furry bundle resembling a dog and hugged it to her. Wiggle, the ball, spooned mischievously with her, his rough red tongue reaching for her cheek.

"Now . . . Wiggle . . . you leave his shoes alone!" Still grasping the puppy, Judy straightened Dick's bedroom shoes with care, toes pointing straight ahead, slightly worn leather showing conspicuously. Wiggle wriggled. Judy kissed the top of his silken head, and set his squirming body firmly upon the thick bedroom rug. Wiggle immediately sat. So did Judy. The two young things had often sat there on the soft rug, Judy with her cheek resting on the side of the bed, Wiggle with his head between his two white paws and large liquid brown eyes gazing solemnly at Judy. That was how they settled themselves now.

"Wiggle . . . "

Wiggle's ears perked up as best they could and in spite of their length.

"We must take care of his slippers." Judy stopped. The only sound was the clock ticking. Outside the window a bird sang, heralding spring. Wiggle sighed.

"You understand, don't you, Wiggle? . . . Sure you do. Dick knew that I'd love you . . . when he left orders for mother to buy you for my birthday . . . he knew HE wouldn't be here . . . Oh Wiggle . . . don't we miss him, though?"

Wiggle sighed again, then sat up suddenly. He grabbed one of Dick's bedroom slippers between his tiny white teeth, and started away.

"Wiggle! Don't do that! Maybe TODAY we'll get a letter . . . and then we'll know where Dick is . . . and THEN you'll HAVE to stop playing with his shoes!" Judy had grabbed Wiggle, was trying to separate his teeth and Dick's shoes.

"After all, Wiggle . . . they . . . they always notify wives if . . . if . . . Oh Wiggle!" Judy's head dropped on the bed. She wanted to cry, but she couldn't. She only was able to think of Dick, think of her husband, think of the war . . . the war . . . and Wiggle had jumped from her lap, had raced to the front of the house. Wiggle had heard the doorbell. Judy was oblivious.

Then it was that she felt Wiggle's cold nose in her hand, felt his dancing feet on her lap, her leg, her shoulder, heard excited noises resembling barks. Then it was that she saw in his mouth a letter . . . a letter . . . a LETTER in Dick's handwriting! Wiggle's eyes

grinned at her, brown pools of delight. Judy joyfully reached for the letter with one hand, with the other she hugged Wiggle to her body.

"He DID know . . . oh! he DID know, Wiggle!"

Wiggle's rough red tongue reached for her cheek.

—PEGGY HALLIBURTON

AN APRIL EVENING

(To H.C.S.)

An April evening—and I am alone.
The moon shines outside my window
Covering the earth with a silvery glow,
Bringing the faint perfume of lilacs,
The soft, gentle breezes blow.

An evening in April—and I am alone,
Alone with the memory of another April evening
And with hopes of Aprils to be
When you return and in April moonlight
I can hold you close to me.

—EFFIE THORNTON

VIA THE MAILS

Karen's hand trembled as she applied the bright red to her lips. Cherry, her roommate watched critically from her perch in the middle of the bed, her pretty dark head cocked thoughtfully to the side.

"I wish you would wear your hair the way I showed you, Karen. It would look much better," Cherry said at last.

"There's nothing else I can do, darling. This is just the way I look," she moaned, surveying herself in the mirror. Suddenly she pivoted around to face her roommate. "Oh, Cherry, I'm so scared. He'll either be a complete drip or, much worse, a glamour boy."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, Karen, stop worrying. His letters are wonderful so he couldn't be such a drip. Why, his picture is precious."

"I know," Karen answered, now thoroughly unnerved, "only if his picture flatters him like mine flatters me, then there's no telling what he'll look like. I could stand it if he turns out to be horrible looking, but what if he's handsome and dashing? He would expect me to be beautiful and witty which I'm not." She sat down on the bed with a plop. "Oh, why does he have to come to see me? It was so much better the other way."

"You know you would die of curiosity if you never did meet him after this heavy correspondence you've been carrying on. Besides, if you two don't hit it off at all, it won't be the death blow. After all, your letters have been just friendly ones. I think it's rather fascinating myself. Just imagine, meeting your man through the mails. How romantic!" Cherry struck a pose and turned her perfectly featured face towards Karen.

Exasperated, Karen rose, running her icy fingers through her hair. "Yes, if it were you, Cherry, going down to meet Rob, he would be delighted. You know what to say and how to look when you say it. I don't, and frankly, I wish I had never even heard of Lieutenant Robert Hendricks."

The conversation was getting to the difficult stage again, so Cherry swung her long legs off the bed.

"Well, roommate, have fun. I've got to make a fourth at bridge." She blew Karen a kiss and dramatically swept out of the room.

Alone, Karen walked again to the mirror and examined herself, feature by feature. Her long blond hair tumbled carelessly to her shoulders, framing an irregular round face. Her wide brown eyes were set too far apart for beauty, her short pug nose only added to the suggestion of plumpness, and her upper lip was too short for her stubborn chin. She smiled, remembering an advertisement she had once seen suggesting, "Smile, plain girl, smile." Even white teeth flashed back at her from the mirror. "Well, I'm not actually repulsive looking," she decided, turning a bit to catch her full reflection. Karen's clammy fingers played with the bow on her brown linen dress, size 13. It hung well, betraying only here and there the absence of vital curves.

Suddenly jolting herself back to reality Karen glanced at her watch—four-thirty. It was almost time to go. The realization struck her like a fast stop on an elevator, and she walked over to the desk to pick up her bag and gloves. Lying beside them on the polished surface was a long white enevelope. It could not have been more obvious to Karen's eye had it been outlined in neon lights, for it was Bob's last letter, the fateful one in which he announced his plans for the visit. How many similar envelopes had there been since October? They were almost too numerous to count.

Karen fingered the letter for a moment, seemingly to gain strength for her coming ordeal.

"If it hadn't been for Aunt Carolyn I wouldn't be in this mess," she murmured angrily. Oh, it had sounded good at first; Karen had to admit that. She remembered word for word her aunt's letter of last fall.

"There's such a nice young man her at the camp, Karen, dear. I met him on my hostess night at the cadet club, and he seemed so lonely. I felt sure you wouldn't mind, dear, so I gave him your address and told him to write. You write such clever letters that I know they will cheer him up."

After the first letter Karen had written faithfully, eventually exchanging pictures with the young air cadet. She had put all her wit into these letters, recounting in vivid and refreshing phrases her life at college and even hinting at her background and ambitions. Soon she began to enjoy composing these literary snatches from her life and looked forward to each new experience so that she might write Bob about it. He responded with hastily written reports of army life, from cadet to second lieutenant in the Air Corps.

It would be disappointing to Karen if he didn't turn out as she had pictured him in her wildest dreams. Too, she had liked having someone to talk about while the others girls were flaunting their conquests and tales of love.

A door opened down the hall.

"Karen, you'd better hurry or you'll miss your bus to town," Cherry called.

Karen flipped the white envelope back on the desk and walked into the corridor. Cherry's bridge game broke up long enough for the girls to admire Karen as she passed by.

"You look sweet, dear," said Ann Cummings as she clung to Cherry's arm, "but I think it's mean of you not to meet him here at school so we can all see him. Why, on earth, didn't you?"

"Because, if he's ugly as sin and says 'We was', I can come back and tell you he was a handsome and intelligent gentleman, and none of you will ever know the difference," Karen answered, smiling weakly at them as she walked on.

The bus pulled up at the station at exactly five o'clock. Karen stood up, and with watery knees straggled to the street. She stood still for a moment, panic stricken and hardly daring to look around her. Her stomach felt weighted down by a rock, which jumped to her throat when she heard, "Are you Miss Reynolds?"

She swung around to look squarely at a tanned muscular face just a little above her own.

"Karen?"

"You're Rob." Karen said it simply and held out her hand, glad that she had worn gloves so that he couldn't feel her cold perspiring palm.

"Let me look at you," he laughed, holding her at arm's length and warmly scrutinizing her. "You're exactly as I had pictured you, blond hair, brown eyes, and all."

In that moment Karen forgot her plainness and smiled at him. She felt light as a bird and hardly dared to believe that this amazingly attractive young lieutenant standing before her was Rob Hendricks, the lonely cadet, who always forgot to dot his "i's". His broad shoulders and wavy dark hair would make even Cherry swoon.

"I'm glad you approve," she answered. "I—I'm so glad you came."

"My dear," Ann Cummings shrieked as she burst in upon Cherry, sunk deep into her psychology book, "you should see the Adonis that Rob Hendricks turned out to be." She laughed hysterically. "Cherry, he's just like something out of Tolstoy. I don't know how he and Karen hit it off, but if she doesn't want him, I'll take him."

Cherry looked up surprised and jerked off

(Continued on page 24)

JUST THINKIN'

Tall and pink and made of tin, you have a history that I'll never know.
From whence did you come, you silly thing? The ore
What you were made from—how did it come into existence?
Were these atoms floating about in space at one time and when God said,
"Let it be" did they come together and settle down as part of this great earth?
Did those atoms meet other atoms and form deep under the soil the mineral which would some day be just you?

Did a mucky, muddy miner pile rocks upon a car and drag them to the surface?
Did a corporation in New York bid on and buy that mineral and have it taken from the mine?
And did it go to a furnace where it was smelted and turned into sheets of metal?
Did that corporation in New York sell that metal to a factory where they made such as you?

And after you were born, what did they to you?
Did they breathe into your depths a soul and hand you to a salesman?

And after that, how came you here?
Did some lesser god write out an order, "Let it be," and they brought you off to school?

What have you seen since you've been here?
Have there been
Tall girls, short girls, dreamy girls and quiet ones?
Have you seen them at their best and at their worst in curlers and cold cream?
Have you been witness to mid-night parties and confidante to secrets of the heart?

Have you been filled with letters, stuffed with trash and burned with cigarettes?
Have you been pushed around and kicked and given faithful service?
And how long will you stay here and what will you do when you are gone?
When you are bent and scarred and well past done with us

Will you return to be transplanted in the dust, and when you've passed that stage
Will you become just atoms once again and once more fill the air?
What have you done, what have you seen, where will you go,
My trash can?

—Miriam Chylinski

LOOK TO THIS DAY

It was the sort of day you remember, the kind you recall in troubled, lonely moments. I knew it was no ordinary day, like many to be lived and forgotten, but a special day, like few—to be lived and long remembered.

It was early when we started out, the sun warm on our backs and heads. There was no such thing as time, so we walked slowly, kicking the soft sand, laughing when we looked at our dirty shoes, our dusty socks. To the west were dark clouds, piled high. We looked at them; that was all. It would not rain, for the day was *ours* and the sun our friend.

I can see him now, his eyes squinting in the bright sun, his mouth grinning whenever I stumbled. He had on faded blue trousers that were ragged over his tennis shoes, borrowed and too big. His jacket was tied around his waist, for the sun was hot. The whiteness of his polo shirt emphasized the brown of his arms. His battered rain hat, best loved and most prized of his possessions, sat ridiculously on the back of his head, making him look even more like a small boy. I had on a faded blue wash dress, the type of dress you are happy in, my "little girl dress," as my family calls it. My shoes kept eating up my socks, which were evidently too small.

It was easy walking until we left the road and started down the rough path into the woods that led to the falls. We could scarcely find the way for vines tripped us and dried branches blocked the path. But it was fun! I felt like Daniel Boone, for I led the way not knowing exactly where I was going but determined to find the spot I wanted him to see. Sometimes we would stumble almost falling into deep gullies cut into the earth. At times the banks on each side of us were higher than our heads, and I felt small, foolishly small.

Finally, we came to the top of a hill and paused, leaning against a tall pine tree, listening to its sighing music. From somewhere came the sound of falling water. It was only then that I knew I was not lost and that down below around the bend were the falls. As he came closer I experienced a strange confused feeling, a fear that he would not like it, that he would think it small and not something special. But that feeling was gone almost as quickly as it came.

I can see now, when I close my eyes, how it looked when we turned the bend, sunshine on bubbling water, huge rocks, fresh, green trees, and the odor of pine needles in the cool, damp air. Neither of us spoke a word. We walked to the huge flat rock and sat down to rest. He lit a cigarette and looked around, up at the blue sky filled with small, restless white clouds, down at the gushing water, around at the jutting rocks on all sides. I decided then that he liked what he saw, and I was glad.

After resting a few minutes, we decided to cross the stream and climb the hill, slippery with pine straw, so that we might sit on one of the high overhanging rocks, and look down at the water. We laughed at our big footprints on the wet, soggy sand as we stepped down to cross. Jumping to the opposite bank, we narrowly escaped falling into the cold water that seeped through our shoes. As we climbed the hill we held tightly to each other's hands and pulled one another up, grabbing bushes and rocks when we felt ourselves slipping.

I shall never forget the realness of that little time we sat on the rick, high above the fall. We said very little, but we were happy. *I know it.* The real beauty of that time was not lost in recollections of the past and dread-

ed fears for the future. Too often the past tunes our ears to the future so that each today strains forward to catch the tangled music of tomorrow. But there was a separateness about this day. The sun was hot, almost like a summer sun, and we laughed at each other's red faces. Occasionally, we glimpsed a frightened lizard below us on a fallen tree trunk, poised a moment, still and almost unnoticed against the bark.

Everything was quiet. I though how glad I was that I was there, there with this boy, his crumpled rain hat pulled down over his face to shield his eyes. I though he was asleep, but suddenly he said, "This is the first day in a long, long time that I haven't felt worried. I don't know exactly why, but suddenly I'm not afraid."

Happiness like something I had never known before washed over me. This was what I had wanted for him, a crystal day unclouded by the thought of tomorrow. I had no real gift to offer him, only this day—this day to be long remembered when he felt his teasing, carefree youth lost in the harshness of war.

—Elizabeth Jones

POEM

My love for you is like the snow,
The deep, white silent snow
That drops in soft caressing flakes
To warm the cold earth.

Just so, the love you give to me,
The deep, pure gentle love
Surrounds me in carressing folds
To warm my heart.

—Mary Collins

EVEN THE GODS CANNOT

In loneliness
I stood
Beneath a sky of black.
Deep clouds the winds tore open in steady fury
As the first thaw crumbles
Winter ice.
Impulsively I defied
The awful challenge of the wind
Which cut across my face in burning flight
And strove to bind frailty to humankind

Of a sudden gleamed
A splendid light
That shone upon the clouds
Exposing
Only fleetingness.
The fullness of the moon spread light that touched
The very tips
Of the black heaven.
And with the coming light
The wind,
Abashed,
Let stop its fury.

I paused in my defiance.
My eyes turned from the light.
Thoughts of my life stifled my feverish mind,
With the growing speed and fury
Of the clouds
I had sought the gifts of the gods.
Racing on toward black endlessness
I had used
The pagan gifts.
Blindly,
Madly,
Furiously racing forward
Able never to turn back from wild pursuit of
Worldly happiness.
Like the wind-torn clouds of black
I had soared on
Ready now to stop.
Ready to give back the gifts that were not made for me.
But the gifts of pagan cannot be recalled
The giver has no power to recall.

Then lo . . .
The brightest Light burst forth.
My race was slowed
And stopped.
And in the warm and Greatest Light
The gifts lost hold and dropped away.
The magnetic fury of lesser gods
Melted
And dissolved in the gleaming
Light of God.

In stilled
Aloneness
Shared with Him
I knelt beneath the sky made white
And thanked the God
Who can recall.

—P. W.

POEM

My days are spent forgetting you,
The long slim days that are drawn out and narrow
Or the fat days with too much in them.
All winter long I am filled with terror for the spring
And the spring for the year
When I must go on forgetting—
I had you once, you were mine and beautiful,
So completely a possession,
And now you are a pearl that has rolled away
So far—you are so far from me
And I spend my time forgetting.

Summers are slow and much too hot
With you gone—and the wind—
I reach for an ice cream and remember you like chocolate,
I stand on a walk that leads into the sea
And the whiteness blows into my face
And the sound and smell of the sea
Fill my head with bursting memories;
The surf has known our casting.
I hop a jitney to lose myself in the city
Where even the stuffiness is better than freedom
Alone on the shore;
Freedom of thinking
When I should be forgetting.

Summer melts and I do too
In the heat of my thoughts.
The pungent odor of September comes
Like a headache;
Once the leaves and skies and grasses.
Were brilliant with tense expectancy

But now the brilliance is a fire
That burns remembrance indelibly into my brain;
Every autumn path or purple weed
Is alien
Because my hand is not in yours
But stuffed into my coat pocket
I shiver and the night is barren
And the harvest moon rolls
Without a path to roll in.

Winter is a white cold wind
That leaves me more alone;
My bed is cold and I resort to bed socks,
You knew I'd need them when you were gone . . .
How laughable then . . .
I cover old ashes with new ones and flames
And I smell the pine smoke in your hair
But you are on the other side of the snow
That grows deeper outside my door.

We were always happiest in spring
But now I spend my spring forgetting.
New leaves were watched and tender then
Now I tear them from every bush and bearing tree . . .
They are almost too green this year.
And the mirror that is lake
Throws back your eyes at me
When I stoop to stir the easy ripples . . .
Your eyes are mine.
Springs are hardest, yet I go on forgetting you
All through the year—forgetting.
Why must I still remember?

—PRISCILLA LOBECK

MRS. M. VAN P.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Has three kinds of furs,
An alarm clock with three kinds of ticks,
A cactus tree
With three kinds of burrs,
And a cat with three kinds of licks.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Owns a double garage
And a knife with two kinds of blades,
A Siamese bee
From a Hindu mirage,
And a bush with three kinds of shade.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Drives a light blue car,
A black one with chromium plate;
A yacht for the sea
In a boathouse afar
And a ricksha her pleasure await.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Collects laces and cups
And can openers with mechanical wheels.
It's luncheon at three
At midnight she sups
And her horoscope tells how she feels.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Belongs to eighteen clubs.
And presides at only ten.
She prefers hot tea,
Chiropractic rubs
And a rubber strap under her chin.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Shops her mornings away
And lunches with "some of the girls"—
Then it's U. D. C.
Or P. T. A.
Or a try at some permanent curls.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Diets at night
Then dines when the opera is over.
The upper crust agree
With all their might
Her husband will ne'er be a rover.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Returns at two
To tuck the children in bed.
She laughs with glee
When they say, "Pooh, pooh!"
And asks if they've both been fed.

Mrs. M. Van P.
Leads a model life
She's the talk of the woman's page.
She's certainly free
Of domestic strife
And she never shows her age.

Her visiting cards
Are strongly embossed
With the fanciest letters you've seen—
More sought than the bards
Than bright copper, more glossed,
"Mrs. Myrtle van Philistine."

—MARTHA RUMBLE

'TIS BUT A CLOUD

'And we are put on earth a little space
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.
The Little Black Boy.
—WILLIAM BLAKE

CHARACTERS

Mrs. Scott
Linda—her daughter
Rachel—Scott's washwoman
Callie—Rachel's daughter
Ann Elizabeth—a neighbor child
Mrs. Chandler—a neighbor
Norma—spoiled brat
Winkie—guest at birthday party

SETTING

The action takes place in the back yard of the Scott home in a small Southern town.

SCENE ONE

[*Linda, Ann Elizabeth, and Callie are playing in the sand pile in Linda's backyard. Ann Elizabeth kicks at sand-castle that Linda and Callie have made.*]

Ann E.: I'm going to tear this ugly thing down and build something pretty.

Linda: Don't you touch our castle. [*Tries to stop her, but is too late.*]

Callie: It warn't no ugly castle. It's a heap purtier than anything you can make.

Ann E.: Listen here, Callie, this isn't your sand pile.

Linda: Well, it's mine, and you keep out of it.

Ann E.: All right, I will. I don't want to play in your old sand pile. It isn't any good anyway.

Callie: It is so. You ain't even got one, so there.

Ann E.: Neither have you. You have to come up here all the time to play.

Linda: She just comes 'cause I want her to.

Ann E.: Humph, before I'd play with any nigger—

[*Callie's eyes grow big; she sits in stunned silence.*]

Linda: Don't you go calling Callie names. I'd rather play with her than you.

Ann E.: Why, you old hippopotamus.

Linda [*reciting*]: I'm rubber and you are glue; everything you say bounces on me and sticks to you.

[*Rachel comes from house with bundle of clothes, calls to Callie*]

Rachel: Come here, Callie, I want you to go start de fire for de boilin'. Here's three matches, and don't you go wastin' 'em. I got de fire all laid. After dat you can he'p me sort dese clos. Come on now.

[*Callie gets up rather eagerly, and she and Rachel exit.*]

Ann E.: Does Callie always wear your old desses?

Linda: I don't know, don't care— [*calls*] Hey, Callie, hurry back.

Callie: [*off stage*] I'se hurryin' fast as I can.

Rachel: You leave her alone, Linda. She's got to he'p me awhile. I's already behind de time, and dis heah wash is bigger'n ever.

Ann E.: She isn't coming to the party, is she?

Linda: Uh Uh [*tries to change the subject*] Did you know I was six years old?

Ann E.: That's nothing. I've been six since February eighth.

[*Callie runs back in breathless*]

Callie: I's all through. I was quick, wasn't I?

[*Woman's voice is heard calling Ann Elizabeth.*]

Ann E.: Oh, I gotta go. We're going to Aunt Martha's today. Bye. [*exit*]

Linda: Bye. Callie, let's build another great big sand castle.

Callie: We's goin to need some water: dis sand's too dry.

Linda: All right, we can get some of Jip's water.

Callie: I'll get some. [*Picks up a little cup, goes over to old iron pot used for Jip's drinking water*]

Look what I found.

Linda: What? Lemme see.

Callie: It's a po' li'l ol' drowned bird.

Linda: We've gotta get him out of there.

[*Callie takes bird out.*]

Callie: Po' li'l thing; he sho must a bin thirsty to try to drink outen that big old pot. What we goin' to do with him now we got him out?

Linda: Why Callie, we could bury him under the fig tree, and have a real little fun'ral like Cock Robin, and you can be chief mourner, and I'll be the preacher.

Callie: You be chief mourner, and I'll be de preacher, 'cause you ain't never seen a fun'ral an' I has.

Linda: You haven't seen a fun'ral neither.

Callie: I has too done it. I went las' month to Mr. Rufus' fun'ral.

Linda: Callie, you're telling a big old story 'cause I can see white spots in your eyes.

Callie: Mama, [*shouting to Rachel*] Mama, didn't I go to Mr. Rufus' fun'ral? Mama, tell her I went.

Rachel: [*off stage*] You went all right, chile, but dis goes to show dat you is so far from de truth most of de time dat nobody's ever gwine to b'leve you.

[*Mrs. Scott comes down the back porch steps. The children run to her excitedly with the dead bird.*]

Linda: Oh, Mother, look at the little bird that got drowned in Jip's water.

Mrs. S.: That's a shame.

Linda: Listen, Mother, we're gonna have a fun'ral, and I'm gonna be chief mourner, and Callie's going to be the preacher, and—and—

Callie: I'm gwine to be de preacher 'cause I done bin to a sho nuff fun'ral.

Linda: Mother, may we have some of the yellow roses, and we need a box for a coffin too?

Mrs. S.: Yes, but don't take any more than you need.

[*Rachel enters, stands shaking her head and smiling.*]

Rachel: I do declare, what you chillun won't think up nex'.

Mrs. S.: Linda, don't forget to get Jip some fresh water.

Linda: I won't, but Mother, what can we use for a coffin?

Mrs. S.: Let's see; how would an empty match box be?

Linda: That'd be good.

Callie: We sho is gonna have a good ol' fun'ral.

[*Children run off.*]

Rachel: Oh, Miz Scott, I most fo'got what I come for. Can I get some more bluin'?

Mrs. S.: I'm sorry, Rachel, I ordered some, but it hasn't been delivered.

Rachel: Dat's awright: I don need it yet no way.

Mrs. S.: Well, Rachel, it won't be long till the children will be going off to school.

Rachel: Yassum, jest two mo weeks.

Mrs. S.: They won't be seeing much of each other after that.

Rachel: No mam, but dat's to be expected.

[*Curtain*]

Scene Two

Time: Early afternoon of the same day.

[*Mrs. Scott is arranging chairs with the help of a neighbor, Mrs. Chandler. Several children are standing further back, chattering,*

Linda runs up to her mother to get her sash tied.]

Linda: Mother, the party is so much fun, but I wish Callie could be here.

Mrs. Scott: I know, but Callie wouldn't have felt right being the only colored child here, and then you know some of the children might not have been nice to her. You must understand that not everyone has a friend like Callie.

Linda: But, Mother, Callie is my best friend of all.

Mrs. S.: I know; Callie will come up later, and you and she can have a second party all by yourselves, but run along now and play.

[*The children run out.*]

Mrs. S.: It's hard for Linda to realize that she and Callie can't go on being so close.

Mrs. C.: Well, it's your own fault. It's perfectly disgraceful the way you have let her limit herself to one child, and a little Negro at that.

Mrs. S.: Callie is a fine little girl, and I believe Linda has profited by knowing her.

Mrs. C.: Surely you don't mean that.

Mrs. S.: But I do. Callie has taught Linda very much, finding pleasure in little things, the joy of sharing with others, and the knowledge that all nice children don't live in white houses and have dolls and tricycles. I'm afraid Linda has gained far more than Callie has.

Mrs. C.: I simply can't see it, but at any rate I'm glad you realize that they can't go on like they have been.

Mrs. S.: Yes, the break is inevitable.

[*Linda and Winkie enter. Linda goes to her mother excitedly.*]

Linda: Mother, guess what? Winkie's daddy made her a playhouse, and it's real big and it has a real little stove, and a table, and a bed and everything, and Winkie wants me to come play in it tomorrow.

Mrs. S.: Will it be all right with your mother, Winnifred?

Winkie: Yes'm, Mother wouldn't care.

Linda: Mother, lemme go. Please say I can go, hear, Mother?

Mrs. S.: Of course you may, Linda, if Winkie is sure her mother won't mind.

Linda: Goody. Goody.

Mrs. S.: You shouldn't have left your guests, Linda.

Winkie: We were just playing hide and seek, and we got home free. Marty is still looking for June.

Mrs. S.: All right. How about having them come back for some ice cream and cake?

Linda and Winkie [*running off yelling*]: Refreshments!

[*Mrs Chandler went into the house during previous conversation. Mrs. Scott fills dishes of ice cream from the freezer and places them on the table. Six other children besides Winkie and Linda come in. They noisily gather around the table where the birthday cake is. They have usual ceremony of blowing out the candles. The children begin eating and talking. Mrs. Scott goes into the house. Suddenly one child notices that Callie is standing on the other side of the fence, looking wistfully over. She is cleaned up, and has a large pink bow in her hair. She is wearing one of Linda's old dresses that is much too small for her.*]

Norma: What are you doing looking in? You don't b'long here.

[*The others look up indifferently, but they are far more interested in eating.*]

Norma: [*going toward Callie*] Yah, Yah, you can't come to the party. Don't you wish you could? This ice cream and cake is so good. [*gloating*] The cake is as black as you are. [*giggles*]

Linda: [*embarrassed, not knowing what to do*] Don't mind, Callie. [*Tears came to Callie's eyes and she gulps and backs away.*]

Callie: I done come too early. Well, bye. [*runs off*]

[*Norma has returned to the table. Linda stands bewildered; she waves her hand limply and chokes out: Bye Callie.*]

[*Curtain*]

SCENE THREE

[*Linda is sitting on the back steps with two large dishes of ice cream and two pieces of cake.*]

Linda [*calling to her mother who is in the kitchen*] Mother, Mother, what time is it? I wonder why Callie hasn't come yet. Do you think she's going to, Mother, say, do you?

Mrs. S.: [*off stage*] I don't know, Linda; maybe she has forgotten. Perhaps you had better bring the ice cream in and put it in the refrigerator. You really shouldn't have gotten it so soon.

Linda: But, Mother, I wanted it to be all ready, just like a party. I thought she'd be here real soon. I guess I'd better bring it in though. [*goes inside*]

[*Linda returns shortly. She sits dejectedly on the bottom step, her chin in her hands, one foot tracing patterns in the sand around the steps. Suddenly she hears the shrill sound of children yelling and laughing. She looks up.*]

Linda: Oh, there is Callie [*yells*] Hey there, Callie, come here.

Callie: [*yelling back*] Hey, Linda. We's playin' Kick the Can.

[*The sound of the children's voices fades as they run on.*]

Linda: [*yelling*] Callie, Callie, come get some ice cream and cake. Hear, Callie, Callie.

Mrs. Scott: [*comes out*]—Oh, you saw Callie?

Linda: Yes'm, but she wouldn't come eat her ice cream and cake, and I just yelled and yelled.

Mrs. S.: Don't worry about it. She probably didn't hear you. You know how you are when you're playing, and I call you to supper.

[*Linda sits pensively while Mrs. Scott stands nearby looking at Linda sympathetically.*]

Linda: [*hesitatingly*] Mother.

Mrs. S.: Yes.

Linda: Mother, you know Callie came up before the party was over.

Mrs. S.: Did she? I didn't know [*sits down beside Linda*]

Linda: Uh Huh, and, well, they, I mean, Norma kinda hurt her feelings.

Mrs. S.: Oh, I'm sorry.

Linda: [*bursting out*] Mother, do you think that Callie will never come back to see me?

Mrs. S.: I wouldn't say never.

Linda: [*almost crying*] Oh Mother, birthdays arent so much fun. I don't like to be six years old.

Mrs. S.: Linda, there are good and bad things about growing up. You must think of the good things. Remember you're going to see Winkie tomorrow.

Linda: [*brightening, childlike forgetting for the moment about her sadness in anticipation of the next day*] Oh Mother, I forgot to tell you. Winkie has a pony!

[*Curtain*]

END

—DOROTHY LACHMUND

VIA THE MAILS

(Continued from page 12)

her glasses.

"Well for goodness sake! Can you imagine? My own roommate. Darling, go put on some lipstick, and we'll go down and meet him."

Ann gave Cherry a knowing look that spoke volumes and reached for the doorknob but paused before she turned it.

"Uh, oh," Ann said softly. "The patter of little feet."

The click of high heels in the corridor grew louder, and then Karen pushed open the door to her room. Cherry threw her arms around her roommate and began a rush of questions.

"Darling, how was . . . ?" Cherry faltered.

Ann looked startled for a moment then pointed mutely at Karen, for upon her brown dress was penned a pair of silver wings.

—MARY BYERS

DE LORD, HE IS GOOD

The first rays of the October sun slants in through the screenless windows of a three-room tumble - down, negro share - cropper's shack. Jonothan stretched his sleepy limbs as he stirs on his mattress of corn husks in the far corner of the lean-to. On the floor beside him Niccodemus's tail thumped gently. Noise drifted through the closed door, and the smell of frying sideback seeping through the cracks of the wall makes Jonothan aware of the empty feeling in his stomach.

"Jonothan Jones!" called his mother from the kitchen. Before the summons could be repeated, Jonothan stumbled through the kitchen to the wash basin on the small porch off from the kitchen and dashed the sleep from his half-closed eyes with icy cold water.

"Son, yo pa has already done gone down to the bottom to start breaking up dat land fo' de corn dat we'll be plantin' next spring. Guess you'd better milk Flora Bell while I get yo' breakfast. I'll feed dem chickens after we's done et." Hattie Jones skillfully put a corn pone on the stove in a thin black skillet.

"Yassum," replied Jonothan. From a nail on the wall he took down a dented pail, and hurrying down the porch steps, he started toward the barn. "Cook-a-doodle-doo" came lustily from his lips as he mocked the big white rooster which as yet did not realize that the sun is now way above the pines.

When Jonothan returned closely followed by Niccodemus, he sat the pail of foaming milk on the table. His mother, taking the corn pone from the stove, said, "Yo' pa has done et, Jonothan." She turns to a bent old woman who is quietly sitting in a low rocker. "Here's yo' soft bread, Granny."

Hattie Jones sat down at the table. After thinking a few minutes, she said, "You know, I jest don't see how we can use up all dat sugar we'se bought." She got up quickly. "We's going to help de gover'ment all we can, though, and iffen dey wants us to buy sugar with all dem little tickets, we's goin' to *buy* sugar!"

"We'll manage," comforted Granny. "Will's 'pecting extra money from de strawberry patch, and with my egg money, iffen none of us gets sick and runs up a big doctor bill, we'll get by. Sho will, with de help of de Almighty God, who is allus watchin' o'er us."

"Granny", said Jonothan, "yo li'l red hen is out by de woodpile. She's done stolen hers'f a nest already!"

"So dat's what she's been up to, eh? I'll see today whether or no she's got de right number of eggs under her. Dey'll be hatchin' in about fo'teen days."

Jonothan ate quietly for several minutes. Then he looked up with a wistful look on his face. "Ma, has you fo'got?" He threw a piece of bread to his dog.

"Fo'got what, chile? Oh—why 'course not! You be thirteen years old today. My, my, he's 'most a *man,* eh, Granny?"

" 'Most a man—and a young gentl'man at dat, smart as a whip, and jest lak his pa!"

A frown quickly erased Jonothan's smile and a look of perplexity came over his face. "But Ma, I didn't mean—did Pa fo'get—?"

"Fo'get yo' birthday? Most *certainly* not!"

"No M'am, not dat! I mean, fo'get 'bout his promise!"

Hattie began to laugh. "Son, trust you to remember! Yes, yo' pa left word dat you had his permission to go huntin'—all by yo'self, too, 'cepting Niccodemus. His gun is over in de corner of de bedroom. Be careful now, and try not to be gone all day. After I get de washin done I'll probably need you to help me finish hillin' dem taters."

"Watch you don't let no harm come to yo'-

se'f, Jonothan," said Granny.

Jonothan stuffed a piece of cornbread in his pocket as he left the table. "Yippee—bet I finds a rabbit! Leastwise, I sho hope I does." Taking his father's hunting bag from a hook behind the door and putting the gun over his shoulder, he strolled manfully from the house with Niccodemus at his heels.

Jonothan and Niccodemus walked through a pasture toward a nearby wooded hill. In the corners of the barbed wire fences were piles of rock picked up from the land in past years. Thick brambles and briars grew around them. Niccodemus chased a chipmunk toward the end of the pasture. "Atta boy! Sic' 'im, Nicky," called Jonothan. "But, come along now. We'se huntin' bigger game dan dat, we is!"

Digging his grimy toes far down into the dust, Jonothan held the borrowed shot gun of his father's fondly over his little lean shoulder. Pride filled his thin chest—he's thirteen years old today, and Pa, knowing he's 'most a grown-up man" now has lent him his treasured double-barreled gun. "Won't Ma be proud if I brings back a rabbit fer dinner?" runs continuously through his coconut-shaped head, while his mouth waters as he visions the juicy meat broiling over the coals.

Jonothan, as the son of a negro share-cropper, fully realized his responsibility as his parents' invaluable handy-boy in the field, the barnyard, and the house. Willingly and cheerfully, his pearly white teeth showing in a continual grin, he always strove to do his best—getting up at break of dawn to milk Flora Bell and take her off to the pasture, coming back in time to help his father harness the two mules for a day of plowing, and ready to split the kindling for the next day the minute after his supper of greens and cornbread is over. He worshiped his hard-working father and his jolly self-sacrificing mother and loved his grandmother devotedly, but his *pal,* his comrade always, was Niccodemus, his dog.

Bounding to his master's side, Niccodemus growled. Jonothan glanced at him reprovingly. "Hush dat big mouth of yo's. Don't you know you'll scare every rabbit dere is away from here with so much racket?" He sat down on a fallen tree trunk. "Jedging by the sun and de feeling in de pit of my stomach it's way past dinner time." He took the cornbread from his pocket and divided it in two equal parts, throwing one half affectionately to Nicky. Niccodemus licked his master's little black hand appreciatively. "Yes, Nicky, I's 'most a grown-up man now. I's going to make you and Ma and Pa mighty proud of me someday. I might even learn to fly one of dem airplane machines. Else, I's goin' to work awfully hard on dis farm. I might even buy a tractor fer Pa!"

Jonothan settled himself back on the soft grass. The rich golden leaves of the trees formed a halo overhead. "Ain't de red and yellow leaves purty, Nicky? And de way de sun shines down on dem goldenrods. It's purty enuf to be 'most lak heaven, eh, Nicky."

He got up, picked up the hunting bag and the gun and walked toward a patch of briars just as an animal scurries from it toward a clump of bushes. A shot rings out in the crisp fall air.

"I's hit it! I's hit it! Just think! Won't dey be proud of me! Shootin' a rabbit, and sich a fine rabbit, on my thirteenth birthday!" He whistled for Nicky who had bounded off in the direction of the woods. Receiving no answer, he turned toward home expecting to find Niccodemus already at home when he got there.

Dusk was beginning to fall. Inside the cabin, Hattie Jones was warming turnip greens left over from the noon meal. Jonothan burst into the room.

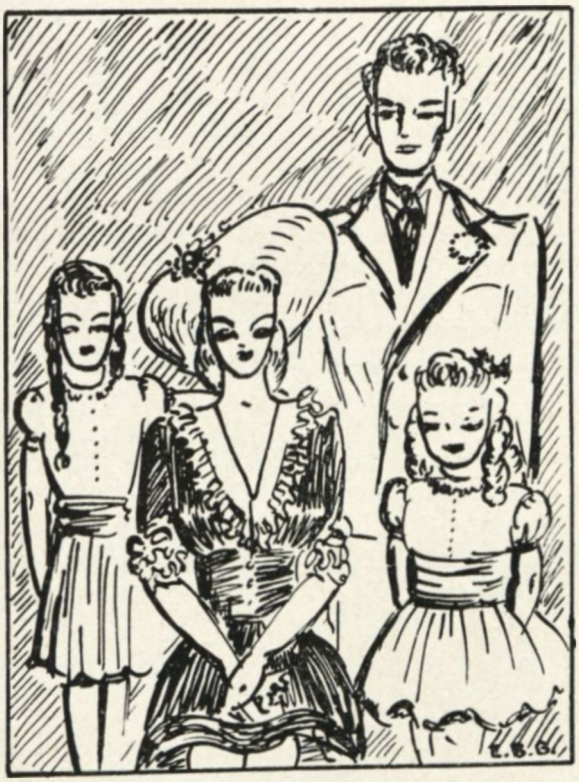
"Ma, Ma! Look what I's got! Look!"

"Land o' goshen, boy! Jest look, Pa!"

Will Jones patted Jonothan on his beck. "Well, son, you most assuredly has proved yo'se'f worthy of de use of de gun yo' gran'-pappy gave me when he died." He broke into a broad grin. "Hmm, won't dis rabbit taste mighty nice with de rest of de greens." Then

(Continued on page 33)

DOWN DAYS



Have you never been to San Francisco—that silver city sitting on her seven hills and from her throne of glory ruling the Pacific? I have.

It was about twelve years ago that the chug, chug, chugging of the train and the black smoke careening past the windows of our day coach introduced us to our foster-mother, who actually welcomed us when the depression and NO MUSIC drove us from Los Angeles. Pop, the leader of our safari, had gone ahead about two months before. And now like a frustrated old maid grabbed his help-meet and two babies from the train and rushed us to the nearest trolley. "Ye gods," thought I, in my nine-year-old way, "what a queer street-car." Junior, with her head sagging on her chest, gave up thinking and settled back into Morpheus' arms.

Impression transmitted at sight of new home was that an etching had come to life. Sharp, short, straight lines characterized the rambling ugly grey house; but after a little two-by-four white cottage with rooms like closets, a place like this brought back early speculations on how heaven would appear. All was fine until Mom mentioned food. "Oh, yes!" sang Pap. "Right back here in the kitchen. Everything you want." In went the kitchen door, in pushed Mom with Junior and

me trailing behind. Food—we were hungry. All the way from Los Angeles all we'd had was grapes and an orange the nice conductor had given us.

The table was lavishly spread with—blanched cashew nuts, dried prunes, maté, unsalted crackers and (what disgusted Mom most) dried apricots with hot water poured over them. A repast for kings—but NOT for us, Mom decided. Questioned, Pop revealed that since he'd been in Frisco he'd met a couple of musicians who had interested him in the Rosicrution faith, and according to them this was the only kind of food fit for human consumption. Mom—or Higher Education, as Pop called Mom, who as Pop said should be pulling in $25,000 a year for teaching Home Ec at the University of Michigan 'cause she was such a good cook—didn't agree. I, personally, thought Mom was right but diplomatically (for about the only time in my life) kept my mouth closed.

I felt my hand grabbed, saw my coat pushed at me and saw Junior being buttoned into hers. Mom put on her hat and the next thing I knew we were walking up Fillmore Street to get "something hot in us."

So that was it—our first night in San Francisco.

Conditions weren't much better here than in Los Angeles; there was just as little music, and Pop couldn't seem to find anything to do that would add up to "jack". After all—he was a musician and had been steeped in harmony and counterpoint since day "1". At college he'd let his ! * ? * ! - law books take care of themselves while he gave all his attention to his beloved Muse, and now was no exception to the other parts of his life. Pop just couldn't work in an office, and as far as being a salesman went—well, that was just as bad as practicing law. He'd have given away the vacuum cleaners or whatever else he was peddling just as he used to pay the court fees for his "poorer clients", and the poorer ones seemed to be the only ones he ever got.

So with no money we turned to the Musicians' Union and *it* began to figure in our lives. No one could pay his dues back in '31—therefore, the breadwinner of our little family wasn't out of step. But like bees go for honey on a hot summer's day, just the same way did down-and-out musicians flock around Daddy. Not many days after the Musicians Union visits started, new faces began to be seen around home. First there was Armand, a long, lanky, kinky-headed Frenchman sawing on a Stradivarius (or reasonable facsimile), who came to live at our house. He moved in on the big bulky couch in the living room, and his effects were stored in an ancient victrola cabinet.

Of course, Pop had known Armand back in Michigan, but the next one who came, we'd never seen before. That was Abe, Abe Serlin. He played a horn. I never was sure just what kind it was, but I think it was a sort of middle sized horn from which Abe drew those bewitching tones that fascinated Junior and me. Armand didn't interest us quite so much, for he insisted that his parlor, while he was practicing, was not a suitable place in which two small girls with squeaky voices should raise their doll families, even though it was the only room that had a fire place that didn't smoke with each change of the wind.

The next minstrel that came was the one who was really different. That was Roby. He moved in bag and baggage onto the back porch, the coldest place you ever saw and what Mom had been using for an ice box. First he set up his army cot and then scattered his belongings over the floor and in the corners. Best of all, he taught Mom how to brew Roby-ized coffee. Aforesaid beverage was made by pouring hot water over coffee grounds used before. After four of five times the essence was *completely* gone and with what was left Mom always told our fortunes. Such fortunes—a job for Armand, a journey for Pop,

or money for Abe or Roby and even Prince Charmings for Junior and me. On top of a good ole hot Pine Street special—eggs cooked with rice—what could have been nicer? And after the dishes were done and each one had played some "little thing" he was composing, Mom told Junior and me stories, washed our necks and ears and settled us in the nice big soft bed, sang to us—all kinds of songs—and then we slept.

Roby had a car—or at least that's what *he* called it. A Model "T" Ford with a minute organ strapped to the back. Doorless, windowless, equipped with a noisy horn and piled high with music—the DESERT RAT painted on the side. Until Roby had snagged Pop, he'd lived with and in the DESERT RAT for months, and it was really a part of him. Because Mom was so nice to him, Roby took her to the show once—once, I say, for all the gods on Mt. Olympus could not have forced her into that RAT again. Down those hills flew Mom with her heart in the bottom of her stomach, clutching Roby and praying that some day the ride would end. It did, but Mom couldn't enjoy the show thinking of the journey home. When finally safe harbor was reached, Higher Education breathed freely and didn't leave the house again for days.

Rattly, and incongruous as it was, the DESERT RAT moved under its own power and came in handy hundreds of times when Pop and Armand needed a ride. Junior and I liked it, too. Boy, oh boy! It was just like a roller coaster and with a couple of chocolate sodas slurped in afterwards, we had our own amusement park. Besides, Roby was funny. He taught me to play the SPRINGTIME IN THE ROCKIES, and I felt myself a virtuoso of the highest degree. Roby had a quick teaching system of piano playing and, though he himself was a pretty good musician, considered his brain child as having hit the high point in music. Money never seemed to follow his train of thought, but the owner of the DESERT RAT kept on trying.

* * * * *

That winter was a hard one, no cash, not much of anything. We had Thanksgiving dinner and many subsequent ones at the Governor Grill that was sponsored by the Musicians' Union. The Salvation Army furnished me with the most stylish things in coats, and Mom sank her last couple of dollars in a pair of Red Goose shoes for Junior, who insisted they were Blue Goose shoes, because every time it rained the shoes faded blue on her feet.

* * * * *

News came from Los Angeles that things were picking up and off we hopped for the South in imitation of our feathered friends. But I guess we didn't live right, for though Job's turkey had nothing on us in Frisco, still it was different. It was congenial. Mom and



Pop seemed to fit into the Bohemian and cosmopolitan life of the Fillmore and Mission Districts, while the normal existence that an overgrown hick town like Los Angeles afforded didn't jive with their rather hectic spirits. But Daddy got a job directing a small band on the Dollar Line Boats going to South and Central America and made a little cash to keep us in bed and board. Just as soon as she could, Mom sold the furniture and got enough ducats for us to trek on up to Frisco. Pop left his boat and came too. So there we were back home once more, minus even the furniture money that we'd had when we left. Mom got us an apartment on California Street right near the big car barn. This time there were no musicians living with us, but Armand and the rest still came around for an occasional meal. Pop struck up a new friendship. That is, he had known Mr. Blaha before, but had never become chummy. But now Blaha had Pop under his sway and wholly dictated to him regarding his diet and habits. No more meat, no sugar, no flour, no more anything except fruit and vegetables. It wasn't very long before the nerves, figure and complexion of the paternal parent became markedly changed. The first were strained, the second was less and the third was a deep hue of lovely saffron yellow. Mom's disposition suffered too, and finally one night what was bound to happen, happened. Blaha came over, as usual, and brought Mother, as a peace offering, a huge delicious apple into which he had sunk his last nickel. He gave the apple to Mom and after Mom had thanked him and walked across the kitchen to fry some bacon for her and Junior and me, Blaha opened his mouth and stuck his foot in. "Pork, pork, how heinuos, throw it away. Don't feed those children bacon! Give them vegetables, a half a cabbage, a tomato, and two carrots, but don't give them flesh! After all this time I've been trying to show you what to eat and getting Charlie in perfect health, you feed those kids meat?" Mom picked up the apple and let fly. To her astonishment (for she hadn't meant to hit him) it struck a surprised gentleman in the middle of his face, squashing his nose and parting his hair. With a scream and a bound, Blaha was gone—gone until next week when he was back again preaching.

'Bout a couple of months later Pop met a new guy—an astrologer and a slightly more sensible man than most of the picked-up cronies. Pop asked him to dinner. Mother nearly fainted when she heard what was in store; for she didn't have a cent, and thought she ought to fix something. Pop hadn't given any orders as to what food was to be served, so Mom got a chicken on credit, borrowed some potatoes from the woman upstairs, a cake from the landlady and received contributions from the whole house. Believe it or not, it was a real dinner and one such as hadn't graced our table since—well, I don't know. Pop came in with his newly acquainted and introduced him as Mr. C. We sat down at the table and Pop started yelling, "Where's my scum soup? Can't eat this meat. Cake! Throw it away! Throw it all in the garbage." Mom quietly rose and did as she was bade. One after the other the cake, chicken, vegetables, potatoes were dumped into the can by the sink and there sat an amazed and popeyed man and guest.

After that Mom got Pop back into the old run of things again and for a short time we didn't have any more fusses about food.

* * * * *

Sundays were always spent near the water. Sometimes we went to the beach, rode on the merry-go-round, had an ice cream cone (if Pop was flush) took a walk through Golden Gate Park, never missing the Japanese Tea Garden, and then home to Mom and sundry bards and minstrels that strolled in for a cup of java during the evening.

Other times Pop took Junior and me down to Fisherman's Wharf to see the boats and

smell the fish. Mom didn't like trips like this, but Junior and I revelled in them and anxiously awaited Sunday afternoon when Sunday School was over and Pop said, "Come on, kids, let's go." In two shakes we were ready ready and off we went.

I hated fish and anything to do with them, but I loved the clean little boats with white sails, the longshoremen lounging around the docks and the green lobsters and the little crackers they served with the sea food. Inevitably, sometime during our walk, Junior would secure an inch-long fish and chase me screaming all over the dock and between the fish stalls. But as soon as she dropped the fish, she got chased, and a hairpulling contest that would have suited a couple of Apaches ensued. Pop wearily pulled us apart and in a calm, ogre-like voice quieted us down, holding one of us on either side of him.

* * * * *

Bank Holiday was declared. Everything was worse than ever. No jobs, not even stray ones! Rent four months over-due and potatoes and flour with occasional canned foods from the Welfare coming in! When we got canned carrots and we'd rather have had peas, I was elected to visit the corner grocer for purposes of exchange. Questioned about said carrots, I replied that Pop had bought them and Mom didn't want 'em. "But, we don't sell this brand——." "But, Daddy got 'em here," said I brimming over at the eyes. "OK! OK! here take the peas." And I skipped out and up Polk Street to see the butcher about a bone for our dog, our imaginary dog. But Mom made pretty good soup with it and even Pop with his rather queer tastes, liked it.

* * * * *

Before this—no matter how hard times were—Daddy's shirts had gone to the laundry, but now for the first time Mom had to do 'em. At least she tried. She started; but Helen, a swell ole gal who lived up-stairs, finished 'em. The whole trouble was—Mom



starched 'em. She made them as stiff as she made Jr.'s and my dresses and when ironed *they* could be stood on the floor without a single wrinkle marring the surface. But shirts were too much. Just like boards the sleeves and tails stuck out. Mom cried and gave up the job as hopeless, but Helen saved the day and Mom. Somehow or other from then till now nary another shirt has Mother ironed. And I guess Daddy's just as glad, for those stiff and stuffy shirts about killed him and his personality.

Looming on the horizon to perk up the spirits sat a marvelous (if not a million dollar project, at least a $100) project that was going to make us rich over night—again. Armand and Pop were going to start a laundry. The shirt episode had given Pop the idea. In these down days other women like Mom must be doing up shirts and making just as bad a

job as she. Why couldn't they have a laundry with minimum rates and by keeping it in their own hands still make money? Why, Helen upstairs could do the ironing, Mom could wash, Armand could keep accounts and both he and and Daddy could care for the Pick-up and Delivery Service. For weeks they planned. Armand ran around finding out where they could buy soap the cheapest, where the best starch could be procured and how one might best take advantage of his bluing supply. Pop worked with figures and decided that we'd move up on Nob Hill next month and would open a classy music school. We'd easily take in $100 a week profit.

Though the Chinese laundry man next door was repeatedly questioned about various problems he never became worried at the prospect of a "velly find laundly" next door and kept on giving advice on sprinkling, etc., disregarding the fact that his status as chief dirty-clothes washer of the neighborhood was on the wane. Don't know exactly what happened, but something did, and a week later if anyone mentioned dirty clothes Pop and his bosom pal had to think twice before they could recall their sudsy thoughts of them.

* * * * *

One night after Daddy had presented a concert in Oakland (most of the tickets were complimentary) and he and we felt he had scored a big success we took the few dimes that resulted and went over east for dinner. As we turned into Montgomery Street Mom stopped to look at some Chinese candy and what was our surprise to hear Pop say, "Tony, old, how are you?" We looked up to see him huggging a professional looking Chinaman. Neither was or is, very slender and their stomachs flattened against each other as they rocked back and forth. Finally after handshaking, etc., Daddy introduced him as an old pal from Ann Arbor who graduated with him. All together we went to dinner to a little place Tony Sieto knew well. Shelves sagging with gaudy materials and sets of Ma Jong, little sandal wood boxes, the dolls and the Chinese nuts, and the old women with bound feet—I was much too busy staring at these to feel like eating. Besides the eating would have been difficult on two scores. First, only chop sticks were furnished. Pop brandished his with a flourish; Junior and Mom had a little trouble, but they were willing to try most anything; and me, well——. Secondly, I had to hold my hanky to my nose and eating with chopsticks thus is strictly passe.

* * * * *

Our apartment was about as quiet and dainty as a side show of Barnum and Bailey. The walls were tan, the curtains orange and flowered and the rug red and green. Ah, yes! gay and Bohemian it was in its own inimitable way. But 'twas home and here it was one day that Pop and Armand threw into our midst a bomb. It wasn't a new project (as we expected) to make money, but as Pop said, they were "tired of doing nothing and accomplishing less." A trip around the world tickling the ivories of an old Steinway was in store, and the future held nine months of work on the PWA for Mom. Out came her trusty shorthand book and sharpened pencil, and Mom slipped out of her housework, like a snake glad to shed its old skin, and got a job at the juvenile court at the huge salary of twelve dollars a week. But Mom's a double Leo born under the fighting Mars, so consequently, as the stars would have it, one of the stenogs at the court took a leave of absence, and since Mom was pretty OK, she got the position. Junior and I blossomed out in new clothes and Mom perked up in Navy suit fosted with grey accessories. Christmas came and I met the Probation officers and Mom's palsies. The youngest member of the family left clutching to her bosom a copy of SILVER PENNIES and yours truly glowed verdantly in new cap and scarf.

The nine months passed in middle class

security and then Daddy was back more dissatisfied than ever with the quiet nothingness of San Francisco. So when epistles from the thumb of his native state came flying in saying Depression was on the wane, parent in trousers began to sit up and take nourishment and before we knew it we were Michigan bound.

* * * * *

It was au revior to San Francisco and all four of us as we stood on the deck of the ferry, looked as if we'd been pulled through a faulty ringer because great globs of water spurted forth into tight balls of hankies as we watched the lights of the Ambarkadero fade into the fog.

We knew how Cicero had felt when he was exiled to Macedonia, but consoled ourselves with the bright little suspicion that some day, like him, we'd return to Rome. And sure as we four did live—we will.

—M. CHYLINSKI

DE LORD

(Continued from page 26)

he noticed the anxious look on Jonothan's face. "Why, Jonothan, what's ailin' you?"

Jonothan burst into tears. "Pa, Nicky is lost! When I shot at the rabbit he run off into the woods. I looks fer him, but when I can't find him, I supposes he's left fer home by hisse'f, but now, when I gets home, He ain't here! What will I do?"

Will's smile turned into a grave expression. "Dat's too bad. But certainly a dog lak he is can find his way back to his own house. Eat yo' supper. Den, iffen he's not back by dat time, I'll go out and hunt fo' him."

The family sat down at a small oil-cloth-covered table centered with a kerosene lamp, and after a humble prayer, ate their simple meal. Unconsciously, each was listening for the sound of padded paws upon the porch. However when the supper was over, Niccodemus still had not appeared. Will rose from his cane-bottomed chair. "You stay here, son. I'm walking down the road a bit, but I'll be back in a little while." He went to the door. "Don't know what I'll do without dat dog to herd up the cattle—but don't worry son. I'll find him."

After he left, Hattie cleared the table and began to wash the dishes. "Why you all make sich a commotion over sich a commond hound dog is more than I can see. Besides, dat dog always did eat ten times more'n it wuz worth!"

"But Ma, I love my dog! I love him!"

"Come, chile," said Granny. "Stop yo' worr'in'. Jest trust in de Lord dat he'll come back safe, and right now help me finish plaiting de rest of dis straw for my new egg basket. I'll be needin' it when I goes to town, Sat'day."

Silence fell on the little group within the shanty. Only the rustling of the straw made a noise as the two young, supple hands and the two knobby, work-swollen hands worked swiftly together. Suddenly something bound through the open door and in the middle of the floor Niccodemus stands holding a partridge proudly in his mouth. Jonothan jumped up and pulled the dog into his arms. Nicky licked his face joyously. "He's back, Ma! He's back! He did come back!"

"And I was saying he wasn't worth de food he ate. Why, he's about de most dog in the whole animal *kingdom!*—We'll have bird for breakfast!" She patted Nicky's head with a gentle hand.

Over in the corner Granny sat quietly watching her grandson. Now she slowly murmured "De Lord, he does watch over us all. Give thanks unto de Lord all ye lands, for de Lord, He is good!"

—ELIZABETH HEARN

A MAN'S LOVE

She watched his strong, beautiful back. Big muscles rippled smoothly under the old shirt as he bent over to break the reed. His strong hands pulled the reed out of the cool green slime of the river bed that had been its home. She watched him slide his long fingers over the wet reed. His hands fascinated her; his hands had always fascinated her.

Charles' hands, like Charles, were a picture of contradictions. His hands looked capable and strong with the strength of cruelty; they looked gentle with the gentleness and tenderness of beauty. Hands that could crush and rip and tear; hands that could mould and soothe and caress—these were Charles' hands.

He laughed gleefully and somewhat diabolically as he said, "Watch!" Eyes intent and face glowing, he bent to his task.

He cut the little reed, and its bruised skin bled the clear, inhuman blood of plants. Then his strong, sensitive fingers drew out the pith, the heart of the reed. Now all the earthly substance had been hollowed out; there remained only a slim and beautiful and empty shell. Swiftly his fingers hollowed out little holes in the slender reed. Then with a joyful laugh, he placed the reed to his lips and played.

Long sweet notes poured into the cool air. Then the music hurt and tore at the soul. It battered and beat her heart and then it poured calmness on the heart. There was pain; there was ecstacy. All from a little reed that had not asked to be taken from its common bed. Cut and bruised and with its heart gone, the little reed could never again be like its brothers. It had been touched by Charles' hands.

As she listened, Mary thought, "I am the reed."

—PAT MARKEY.



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